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105. A method for transmitting at least one stream of audio and/or visual information over a communications network to a plurality of users comprising the steps of:

controlling the routing of the stream of information through the network in response to selection signals received from the users, and

monitoring the reception of the stream of information by the users and accumulating records relating to the reception of the stream of information by the users, wherein at least one stream of information comprises audio and/or visual selections and the records that are accumulated indicate which users did or did not listen to and/or view the entire selection.

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for his courtesy in locating the present application. For the Examiner's convenience in examining the claims, a discussion of the claims, and where support may be found in the specification for the claims, follows:

Independent claims 38, 62, and 81 are derived from claims 1, 19, and 33, respectively, as allowed in the parent application, now PN 5,778,187 (the "187 patent"). Independent claims 102 and 103 are derived from allowed claim 47 of the '187 patent. Independent claims 104 and 105 derive from allowed claim 48 of the '187 patent.

Dependent claims 39, 63, and 82 recite varying the information content of at least one stream of packets or information with the identity of the user to whom the at least one stream of packets or information are delivered. Support for these claims may be found for example at page 1, lines 8-14, page 3, lines 15-20, page 6, lines 25-34, and page 13, line 20 - page 14, line 15.

Claims 40, 64, and 83 recite inserting the varied information content into the stream of audio and/or video

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information or packets. These claims are similar to allowed claim 4 of the '187 patent. Support for these claims is found for example at page 1, lines 8-14, page 3, lines 15-20 and page 4, lines 21-23.

Claims 41 and 84 recite that the varied information includes advertising information. Support for these claims is found for example at page 13, line 20 - page 14, line 15.

The subject matter of claims 45, 46, 65, 66, and 87 and 88 is similar to claims 39, 63, and 82 and 41 and 84 as discussed above. Support for these claims is found for example at page 1, lines 8-14, page 3, lines 15-20, page 6, lines 25-34, and page 13, line 20 - page 14, line 15.

Claims 47, 67, and 89 recite that a first stream of packets or information is stored at an intermediate point in the distribution architecture. Support for these claims is found for example at page 13, lines 23-25.

Claims 48 and 49, claim 68, and claims 90 and 91 (which depend, respectively from claims 47, 67, and 89) are similar to claims 39, 63, and 82 and 41 and 84 as discussed above.

Claims 53-58, 74-78, and 92-98 relate to the compression and decompression techniques of the present invention. Support for each of these claims may be found for example at page 8, line 32 - page 9, line 2 and page 11, line 36 - page 12, line 20.

Claims 59 and 60, 72 and 73, and 99-100 recite varying the information content of at least one stream of information or packets with the identity of the users to whom such information or packets are delivered. Support for these claims may be found for example at page 14, lines 3-5 and lines 13-15.

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Claims 61, 80, and 101 recite that the records accumulated include user information and system-related information. Support for these claims may be found for example at page 5, lines 24-37 and page 19.

Claims 42, 44, and 85 variously recite generating an audio output and/or visual display. These claims are similar to allowed claims 7 and 39 of the '187 patent.

Claims 50-52 and 70-71 variously recite accumulating records. These claims are similar to allowed claims 5, 6, 12, 13, 17, 22, 23, 24, 29, 31, 36, and 37 of the '187 patent.

Finally, claim 79 is similar to allowed claim 30 of the '187 patent.

Applicants believe that all of the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request the Examiner to pass this application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

 Andrew J. Saunders
REG. NO. 40,433

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For Francis E. Morris 24,615
Francis E. Morris (Reg. No.)
PENNIE & EDMONDS LLP
1155 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036-2711
(212) 790-9090

Enclosure